

# The Drabble Journal

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My collection of various Iramako-Gamako drabbles and short fics that do not fit into any of my current stories. These drabbles can cover prompts from cute fluffy topics to smutty topics and everything in between and far away. Most or likely all chapters will not be continued unless it is copiously demanded.

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# The Denial

***Prompt: Number Generation/Prompt Selection- 20, Initial denial of feelings***

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There was nothing to talk about in her opinion about what she felt for Ira Gamagoori. He was a close friend who protected her when Ryuuko couldn't and seemed to be staring at her right now from across the room. She locked eyes with him for the briefest moment before moving her gaze to the floor, trying to control the sudden rush of blood to her cheeks. She shook her head and focused on her lunch, shoveling multiple mouthfuls of food and swallowing it all with minimal chewing. Her thoughts stayed at bay for a moment but the second the food hit her stomach, that tight feeling in her chest returned.

Nothing to talk about how she felt about him. He was a friend and nothing more. She didn't have romantic feelings for him neither did she want to go up to him in this restaurant, grab him by his collar and-

Nope. Nothing at all. Mako continued to eat her table-full of food without another look at her thoughts or at Gamagoori, who sat thirteen tables away in front of one of the windows showing the Tokyo Bay, talking with Sanageyama who was pointing at Ryuuko, who sat across from Mako.

"Mako, do you want that last eggroll?" Ryuuko asked, pulling her out of her thoughts and back on her food.

"Of course!" Mako said, snatching the roll with her chopsticks before they started a war over it and plopped it into her mouth with a satisfied sound. Ryuuko eyed her suspiciously before she grabbed one of Mako's abandoned onigiri and nibbled at it.

"Why do you keep on looking over at Gamagoori, Mako?" Ryuuko asked, point-blank, making Mako choke slightly on the eggroll she was still in the process of swallowing. She made an emergency cough before swallowing all of the eggroll down and slumping on to her face, the table's cold metal top cooling down her blushing red face.

"I'm not, he's looking over at me so I think he wants something but I don't know!" Mako defended, looking up coyly at her friend. Ryuuko obviously wasn't buying it at all.

"Does someone have feelings for Gamagoori?" Ryuuko childishly responded, waving her chopsticks at Mako. Mako's cheeks puffed out in anger, her eyes brightening with determination.

"Not at all! Everyone knows that Gamagoori is forever tied to Lady Satsuki and I have you as an ultimate best friend. There is no room in either of us for mutual feelings or romantic butterflies in our stomachs. Besides, Gamagoori would never consider me for anything besides a friend and a rival. My answer is no, I do not!"

Ryuuko still looked at her like she was lying! Mako knew she didn't have feelings for him. Even as her insides seemed to scramble as she caught Gamagoori staring at her from her peripheral sights and watched his face turn red as he switched his staring spot and muttering possibly about how he got caught staring. She really didn't mind him staring, he should-

No other feelings. Nothing more than friendship. Nothing more than mild rivalry. There was nothing to say about what she felt for Ira Gamagoori, right?

.....Right?

# Kisaragi Maid Cafe

***Prompt: AU(or post anime) Mako working at a maid cafe and the Elite Four just so happen to stop by for lunch***

---

"Why exactly are we going to a frilly maid cafe again, Houka?" Gamagoori asked, eyeing down the incoming building to their right, seeing the door open to them with a sign declaring the shop open, a small line leading out on the sidewalk. A waitress from the cafe stood in front of a podium, playing the frill edges of her required maid uniform as she let in couples and people into the already booked cafe courtesy of the lunch rush.

Out of the four of them, Nonon was the most excited.

"You big giant, this is no ordinary maid cafe! This is the Kisaragi Maid Cafe! The amount of work put into the sweets and food within those frilly, blue and silver walls is so perfect and classical! Not to mention the fact that it holds some of the cutest maids I've ever seen! Petite yet tall, with the fullest figures! A working show with bonus food! I can't believe you can not appreciate the art that is maid cafe, you oafs!"

Sanageyama lowered his head to Nonon's level. "Nonon, your gay is showing again"

Gamagoori dodged the flying pink fists of Nonon as she attempted to trample and maim Sanageyama for his comment, disgusted by his blatant attempts to oust her out for the fact that she was a lesbian; which no one minded at all but Uzu has a death wish or something. He was focused on something different then the usual fights between the snake and the monkey. It was on the cafe. He had this weird feelings that they weren't here just by chance, but that he was being set up. He could be easily wrong as he had been the first four times but he never knew anymore. As they approached, Inumuta

stepped ahead of them, showing his phone to the alerted waitress watching them.

"Ah! The Elite! Forgive me for the wait. We were just alerted of your reservation. Please come in. One of our staff will lead you to your table" the waitress said, the doors flying open for them as the laughter and chatting from inside filtered out. The others in line groaned at their arrival, hoping that not yet another group had reservations ahead of them, but the groups simply let those in line wait. Nonon was correct on how the cafe was both classical and frilly, but now Gamagoori had to admit it was a good frilly. It worked with the blue, red, silver and gold aesthetics of the cafe insides.

"Please follow me" a butler stepped up to them, bowing deeply before leading them through the filled tables and the arriving and departing maids and butlers, colors and styles blurring into a crowd of silk and tailcoats. Nonon couldn't keep her eyes off of anything inside here, and was obviously enjoying this to all high times.

"Come on! How is dressing so hard?" Gamagoori heard someone shout from the restricted room some distance from their table after they were seated and had given their orders for drinks.

"But they won't tie right! I could trip and fall!"

"Get out there Mako! A reservation's waiting for you!"

Gamagoori watched a petite brunette stumble out of from the door, barely catching herself before she collided with a wall. She quickly fixed her bangs and readjusted her skirt before walking toward him and his friend's table, looking like...

... why was she backlit in light all of a sudden? Gamagoori swore she was haloed by light, the lace of her soft blue dress looking translucent in the light. The maid outfit mapped the curves and packages, and all Gamagoori could do was stare as this... this angel in disguise walked toward him the table he was sharing. A smile

broke out on her face and Gamagoori felt his teeth rooting at the sweetness she seemed to spread.

The moment worthy of angelic choir ended as the girl stumbled suddenly once more, the laces of her boots coming undone, trapping her in a shoelace snare, sending her feet into lockdown and sending her body into a fall. Gamagoori was out of the booth quickly, chased by the gasps from his friends as he caught the maid before she hit the floor, his arms under hers so she could land into him. She fell into his chest with a small sound, her hands grasping his arms as they held her up. He kept himself knelt down until she realized that she had not hit the floor but rather hit a wide, expansive, warm chest of a customer who was kind enough to save her the humility of hitting the floor. She looked up at him with an amazed look with quickly morphed into a blush. The same thought crossed his mind and he followed suit with the blush, barely controlling it as she pushed herself off of his chest quickly and sat on the floor.

"Forgive me if I fell into you, sir!" she apologized, not meeting his eyes again. Gamagoori let a small smile form at the corner of his lips.

"You didn't. You tripped and I caught you, which was no issue" he explained. He watched the girl quickly try to tie the boots back up, but he intervened before she could go much farther. "Do you mind if I help you?"

The girl looked at him again, a smile returning to her lips. "Sure! Thank you for the help! No one can show me how to tie these properly and I've tripped too many times already!"

Gamagoori tied up the boots quickly, double-knotting it to make sure that the laces would not trouble the girl anymore. She profusely thanked him for his help in tying her boots right and for keeping her from hitting the floor, standing on her feet and brushing off her skirt briefly before returning his gaze to his gaping friends behind him.

"Oh! You're with the Elite table! Forgive me for that misstep, you three. I'm Mako and I'll be your company and server today for your stay here at the Kisaragi Maid Cafe!"

Gamagoori was really appreciative of whatever lead his friends to this cafe. He scooted back into the booth and gave room for Mako as she joined them for their lunch. She kept looking his way through the entire stay at the cafe and Gamagoori knew he walked out of there with a blush plastered on his face.

"Oi, Gamagoori!" Sanageyama shouted as they walked out an hour and a half later, "You still with us?"

"Of course!" Gamagoori defended, "I'm just a little... distracted"

He could see a brief slip of Mako's hair through one of the round windows as they left. He would have to come back again to see her again.



# Earring Dilemma

***Prompt: Gamagoori can't find his earrings***

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"Gamagoori, just calm down!"

"I WILL NOT! THEY NEED TO BE FOUND NOW"

"Well maybe if you stopped shouting and sat down I would be able to look for them. You panicking will not help either of us find them, so SIT DOWN!"

"Mankanshoku, you don't understand! Those are my most-"

"Enough! You are falling into panic and you need to relax for a moment! Sit down- no, not on the ground like a baby! Come on, come on, on the couch so you can lay out if it helps. There! Now breath in, breath out. That's it! Your panic-induced flush is dying down. Do you need water, anything?"

"No... I-I'm alright now. Thank you Mankanshoku"

"You're welcome!"

"... what if we can't find them, Mankanshoku?"

"We'll find your earrings, Gamagoori! I swear on my mom's famous croquettes that we will find them safe and sound"

Gamagoori sighed softly into the couch pillow under his head. He knew they were here somewhere within the walls of the 34th hallway, possibly in one of thirty classrooms including the abandoned teacher lounge they now used as their base camp for their search, which was still fully stocked to the nines with everything a student could dream of, from junk food to AC to even crystal clear TV. He had dealt with a ridiculous string of rule infractions here and in his disciplinary

duties had somehow lost his earrings, which made no sense to him but one moment they were there, and the next they were gone.

"So we should just start searching in the classrooms, each of us searching a different one and we'll be able to find it faster! Plus they're gold and shiny, so if we shine around these flashlights, the metal of your earrings could glow so we could find them!" Mako explained, holding up two small flashlights, "Now come on! We can find them easy Gamagoori! Trust me, if we can't find them here I will search with you for the rest of the night if it comes to it!"

Gamagoori slowly sat up, giving a weak smile to her before accepting the flashlight she placed in his hands. "Thank you. Now Let's move out! We have 15 classrooms each to methodically explore and search in hopes that my earrings are in them. Start from the far end so we can easily return here once we're done with our task. Is the mission understood, Mankanshoku?"

"Yes, sir!" she shouted, giving him a salute. Gamagoori returned one and opened the door.

"MOVE OUT!"

Gamagoori and Mako were on their mission for his earrings, running to the end of the hall and entering the last classroom on the left and right, turning on their flashlights in the hope that the metal earrings would shine under the bright light. They flipped over desks, went on their hands and knees to search under anything they couldn't lift, and when they found nothing they moved to the next classroom. They sped through them as the search seemed to continue on their pattern of no results, and Gamagoori was getting anxious again. Gamagoori waited in front of their base and Mako went through her last classroom, her flashlight waving around the dark room as the sun slowly sank farther down to the horizon.

"Ow, ow, ow! Stupid desk! Wow, it's dark!" he heard Mako cry, her flashlight dying out then turning on again. "One last place to look..."

Gamagoori watched as the light disappeared and the hallway was left in dimly-lit darkness. He controlled his heartbeat as it sped up and kept calm, making sure he did not slip in his control of the situation. Mako's head popped out of the doorway, flashlight pointing out with her.

"Not in here..." Mako sighed, walking up to Gamagoori as he wordlessly walked back into the teacher's lounge. His left hand went for his earlobes, finding the space his earrings once took up still devoid of them. Gamagoori slung himself on the couch again, deep in thought into where he could have taken them off or where they could have been at. Nothing seemed to click at all besides the tower rooms but Mako was not allowed up there.

Mako meanwhile wandered around the lounge thinking herself, wondering where they could look next for them. Maybe they fell out or something during one of his classes perhaps? Or maybe they were in the tower? She could only think of a few places at best, but most were restricted to her. She sat up on the kitchen table in the lounge's small kitchen area, trying to think of something else she could do.

She flung around her flashlight, turning it on several times before something shined back at her. Something sitting near Gamagoori's Three-Star shirt he had taken off, laid out on the other end of the lounge kitchen table. She scooted over to them and gasped in out surprise, while scolding herself on the inside for not looking around in the lounge more.

"Hey! Are these them?" Mako asked excitedly, holding up what looked like rings. Gamagoori was by her side, examining them carefully to see if they were and lo and behold they were.

Gamagoori groaned as he took them back. "They were in here the entire time?"

"Yep! We may look like idiots right now, but at least we found them right, Gamagoori?" Mako cheered, smiling from ear to ear.

Gamagoori returned it as he slipped his earrings back on, thankful of their weight on his ears again.

"You're right. Thank you for finding them"

# Rolling Rhythms

***Personal Prompt/Headcanon: Mako has a tendency to sing out loud when listening to music, and used to do so whenever she could before meeting Ryuuko.***

***Recommended Song to Read to: 'Rolling Girl' by Hatsune Miku (or SeeU cover)***

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The moment she could, Mako tugged out her old beat up music player, twisted the headphone plug around to make sure she heard the familiar scratchy sound of it connecting to the device, shoved both earbuds into her ears and blared her favorite song. She timed her steps accordingly as the song progressed through its beats and motions, moving her through the bustle and insanity that was Honnōji Academy after classes. She didn't bother stopping by her locker as it did not hold anything of importance to her and left the main building with a skip in her step, the song giving her the cheerfulness needed for a skip. She jumped the last three steps and sauntered through the courtyard, letting the rest of the school revolve without her, as it usually did.

Live and let live. She really didn't care that nobody noticed her. Neither did it matter that she didn't have real friends. The ones she had in her head were good enough. The song she truly wanted to hear played as she took a seat along the fountain of one of the courtyards. No one was in sight, and Mako removed one earbud and deeply breathed in before letting her Vocaloid song play.

" *Ronrii gaaru wa itsu made mo todoka nai yume mite*" she sang as the instrumental began, and she kicked her feet to the beat. Her voice grew solid as she took a breath for the next line of the song.

" *Sawagu atama no naka o kakimawashite, kakimawashite* "

A quick instrumental break took the spot of her singing as she listened with easing fear as the next verse started, and she sang it with the strength needed.

" *Mondai nai. to tsubuyaite, kotoba wa ushina wareta? Mou shippai, mou shippai. Machigai sagashi ni owareba, mata, mawaru no!* "

Mako mentally cheered herself on as the chorus began, and she sang out loud, strong, and on pitch with her vocal range.

" *Mou ikkai, mou ikkai. Watashi wa kyou mo korogarimasu to, Shoujo wa iu shoujo wa iu Kotoba ni imi wo kanade nagara!*

" *Mou ii kai? Mada desu yo, madamada saki wa mienai no de. Iki wo tomeru no, ima.* "

She caught her breath as the next instrumental break came on, catching her breath quickly. She started to slip at the end in her opinion, but she didn't care. She simply sang as she wanted to. No one could hear her and no one would know it was her. She had her private spot to sing like she wanted to. She took another deep breath before starting the next part, her music leading her where she wanted to be.

" *Ronrii gaaru no nare no hate todoka nai, mukou no iro. Kasanaru koe to koe o maze awasete, maze awasete .*

" *Mondai nai. to tsubuyaita...* "

Unbeknownst to her, someone was actually listening to her singing. Leaning against the railing of the circular building wrapped around the empty courtyard, perched up on the second floor, was a visitor. He was smiling as he heard the song continue on as sweet and strong as usual. He could not see around the fountain where he stood, and to this day did not know who sang everyday at the place around the same time. He intentionally did not expect such a thing to happen, but he was captured by the professional sound the singer

gave out, and how each other gave a feeling and meaning. The stronger she sang, the more the songs sounded powerful and meaningful. He knew the words to this song near to heart now. It was the singer's favorite one to sing, and he did not blame her for such a taste in meaningful music.

Gamagoori stumbled on to the singing by complete accident, having to complete a miscellaneous job within this restricted section of the school. At first he was infuriated that a student would be so foolish as to be near here, seeing that most of the rooms here are filled with databanks and electronics needed to sustain the Academy and the town. Though as he heard the mystery singer let free her voice, he found himself entranced and very interested. It was a heavenly voice, never once breaking or wavering, simply singing out the emotion that came with the song. The singer would leave promptly after singing for a bit and no harm would be done. He allowed it to continue on the basis that the student would leave and also on a personal hope that maybe he would discover who owned such a lovely singing voice.

He tried once more to see around the fountain but to no avail. No sight of the person still. He leaned into his right hand and opened his ears to the sweet sound of music and singing he found keeping him in chains, forever caught by it.

*" Mou ikkai, mou ikkai. Watashi wo douka korogashite to. Shoujo wa iu shoujo wa iu, mukuchi ni imi wo kasane nagara!*

*" Mou ii kai? Mou sukoshi, mou sugu nanika mieru darou to. Iki wo tomeru no, ima.*

*" Mou ikkai, mou ikkai. Watashi wa kyou mo korogarimasu." to, Shoujo wa iu shoujo wa iu. Kotoba ni emi wo kanade nagara!*

*" Mou ii kai? Mou ii yo. Sorosoro kimi mo tsukaretarou, ne. Iki wo yameru no, ima ."*

The song ended, and Gamagoori found himself craving more. Yet as he waited there in his perch, he heard not another note from the mystery singer. He walked the length of the second floor walkway to see if he could catch at least a glimpse of the person who sang but still the fountain hid the person behind the voice. He took the risk and jumped to the other half of the building and made his way around, determined to see why the singing he got used to hearing had abruptly stopped. What he found surprised him.

Two One-Star male students surrounded a female No-Star with an obvious menace, the girl blinking like she was oblivious to the fact that the One-Stars had her cornered. He couldn't overhear the exchanges going, but it was obvious the One Stars were pissed and not amused with the girl's act. One sauntered from the other, looking around like he was planning to do something. When he returned and nodded, the boys turned to the girl, who finally realized what was happening. Gamagoori noticed a moment too late, and the boys grabbed for her, slamming her against the fountain rim.

His heart threw him into action, his mind following suit with some sort of plan to stop what was proceeding, and jumped over the railing, preparing himself for the impact when he hit the ground. Dust and dirt flew as he landed, folded up with his knees touching his chest. Both One-Star students looked to him in utter fear as he rose up in height, his intimidation and anger making his size swell well over them.

"Exactly what are you two doing with this student?" He demanded, sending the greatest burning stare at the male students. They let go of the No Star and stood frozen like marble under the overpowering weight of his shadow. One looked like he was about to piss himself, and both were shaking so hard in the knees that they looked ready to bow and scrape at his feet for forgiveness. They didn't even try to defend or excuse themselves, knowing that they were doomed for either expulsion or death. The victim leaned entirely on the fountain for support, watching the display with wide unbelieving eyes.



The students scampered away when Gamagoori growled at them, the baritone note of anger hitting them like a bitch slap. They looked like dogs with their tails between their legs as they ran, one falling on his face before quickly picking himself up and running out of sight before he pissed himself in front of Gamagoori. He turned his attention to the One-Star female student, softening his expression the tiniest bit, but kept it controlled and solid.

"Are you alright?"

"Yep! They only pinned me down, it's all good! They do that to a lot of the others in the slums, so we're used to it. I usually sit here to avoid them afterschool though. I had no clue that they would be here!"

Some color drained from Gamagoori's face. One Star students abusing their power and authority over the No Stars and residents by forcing them into obvious sexual assault situations? Why had he never gotten word of such things happening? Anger coiled dangerously in his stomach, the want to hunt down the retreating One-Stars burning into his thoughts. Something was locking them down however. He processed the girl's words for a moment and realized with a start what she just admitted.

She was the origin of the singing he came to enjoy? She was lithe in appearance, not very imposing with no obvious look of neither talent nor experience yet the voice he heard singing songs every day afterschool came from his brunette No-Star? The truth was confirmed when he saw headphones and a beat up music player clenched in one of her hands.

"Oh no, you're mad! Forgive me for being here and causing trouble" she exclaimed before bowing. He hadn't realized that he was changing his facial expression to one of anger, and quickly made changes. He cleared his throat, his thoughts suddenly on the ones he had when listening to her sing with such passion and heart. He had to control the warmth gently rising through his body.

"I am not mad. If you are here to avoid the One-Stars abusing you, then you may continue to do so, for protection," Gamagoori explained, going red momentarily. Mako saw it before it went away and couldn't stop her jaw from dropping open. She quickly caught herself and smiled with glee.

"Thank you Gamagoori sir! I won't let this privilege go to waste!" she cried, raising a fist into the air, earbuds swinging from them like wrecking balls. Gamagoori turned to leave, but stopped momentarily to leave a parting word to her.

"... Continue to sing as well. Y-you have a lovely voice"

As he walked away, trying to control the outrageous flutter in his stomach and the blush burning his cheeks, Mako was promptly spazzing about the fact that Ira Gamagoori, Disciplinary Chair of the Academy and one of the Elite Four, heard her singing and thought she was a great singer with a lovely voice.

# Inside My Death Chamber

***Personal Prompt: Mako's experiences within the COVER suit.***

***Trigger Warnings: Violent scenes ahead including blood, gore, torture, death, alien possession, mutation, body destruction and deformation and disturbing descriptions.***

---

She wanted to see what was around her but she couldn't open her eyes. She wanted to scream for her family and friends but she couldn't open her mouth. She could barely breathe through her nose yet her lungs had air to keep her going. She could hear the muted pounding of her heart in the darkness around her, yet she felt nothing in her chest. All her limbs and appendages were forcibly locked into place, the feeling of being suspended keeping her slowly rocking and rolling in place. Besides the muffled sound of her heart in her ears, all she can hear is water bubble around her. She could feel the pressure of feeling underwater, yet no water swallowed her.

She didn't like it there. Fear and anger ran through her veins like ice, freezing her lighter emotions. She wanted to lash out and fight against what was keeping her hostage, keeping her locked away from her own sight, her freedom, her life. She ground her teeth together and attempted to move her right arm, working to fight against the tight Life Fibers holding her in place. They gave way and her arm moved from her side up toward the air. Adrenaline coursed through her body as she struggled and shook as she moved her arm through the void, looking to grab anything.

The lines tying her together burned her as she moved, and snapped her arms behind her, tying her wrists together. She couldn't feel her arms and the Life Fibers around her shoulders seemed to disappear. She gave in the lull of the dark and floated without thought. So much for fighting back. She listened for the beating of her heart and found comfort to hear it start again. If that sound stopped, she knew eternal

darkness would follow. She wondered what lies outside of her eyelids, what would she find if she opened her eyes. Would it simply be black, or would she see the billions of threads that made up the COVER? She wouldn't know and could not imagine it. Her surroundings rumbled, temporarily beating out the sound of her heart. She moved her chin half an inch as the pounding of something deeper came into her thread prison.

What was going on? She wanted to see if anything was happening outside of her mind, but her eyes stayed shut to the prison around her. She curled up into herself as best she could and let the primal pounding continue on. She let the burning Life Fibers take what they needed. She let the COVER feed off her and let her mind rest even if for a moment.

Nothing was happening to her anyway besides the leeching of her lifeforce.

...

*Wake up now*

*Come now, open your mind back into life. There is something you can do for me, human. If you will not do as I say, I will force you!*

Mako screamed as the fibers dug into her back, penetrating her body and intruding her muscles and insides. The deadly alien threads dug into her organs relentlessly mapping and hurting her. She couldn't end of shriek of pain and misery as the COVER took advantage of her and ate away at her human form. She couldn't die like this. A few brave threads wrapped around her upper thighs, and Mako howled in fear, violently thrashing around to break free of the torture. The thread count in her body doubled at her resistance, and Mako felt her humanity slip from her grasp enough to have her hysterically begging for her life. Her sanity slipped off its cliff, and Mako broke. The COVER had done damage that could never be fixed or put right. She lost control of her mind and slowly slipped into delusion as the Life Fibers once more entered her body and embedded themselves

in too many places. They entered in every place they could find, but left the head untouched. Her mind was already long gone and useless to them now and there was no point in mind stitching her to stop her from moving. The more she struggled, the more they leeched from her.

Mako could feel the sliver of humanity left in her as the Life Fibers took her to her death. Her humanity told her to fight, to resist them, but her dead mid and exhausted body told her to submit and accept the fact that she was their property now. She belonged as a puppet to them, a meal for them to gorge themselves on. Not a human, but a Life Fiber snack on a stick. Nothing more, nothing less, nothing human anymore.

She let them rise up into her head without as much as a blink, and felt that humanity she held once before kill itself before it fell victim to the Life Fiber's cruel occupation.

No more, no less, not human. The COVER battery made of her enemy.

...

*Resilient aren't we, human? You will be my energy forever until you die. Stop fighting or you will speed up the inevitable.*

Mako broke three threads as she ran from her cage, watching the red tangle shrink behind her. She had to keep running, she had to keep fighting. She had to get free. She vaulted over a thick length of threads as they lashed out toward her, tumbling forward before shooting off into a heavy sprint. Life Fibers took pot shots at every turn she took, slowly wounding her until a hole the size of her thumb appeared in her right arm, bleeding out slowly. They went for her knees next, and Mako collapsed as they tore through her left knee and set her to the ground. Blood surrounded her as her wounds poured out her well-needed blood. The skin on her knees were all but shredded away, thin Life Fiber threads digging into her body. She

had a fair size cut across her face, putting blood in her eyes and blinding her from the onslaught.

She screamed and ripped at the ones who had found their way on to her and bolted again, stumbling around to find an exit to his nightmare track. She jumped over her roadblocks and worked around the clock to pull out stray Life Fibers. She slipped again but evaded the wave of Life Fibers trying to get her. They continued their onslaught of inflicting wounds that created holes in her, hoping to end her before she truly fell to their power. She had too many, and lost enough blood to fall to her knees as they collapsed beneath her, and the Life Fibers took their cue to eat at their prey.

Life Fibers dug into her wounds and took her for food. They shocked her body into actions and she hollered in pain, her dirt-covered fingers digging into her wounds to dig out the invading threads that threatened her life. She wasn't fast enough, and soon they all left her body and grappled to her neck, making her choke on the blood coming from her mouth. She dug at the Life Fiber noose around her, her nails not catching them in the slightest. The fiber flew in by the dozens and took advantage of her open wound and lower defense, entering her and stitching her together the way they wanted. Body parts with holes looked mutilated and unnatural, her right hand now bend toward her at an angle not fit for humans. Life Fibers entering the cut on her face warped her vision, making her pupils white as light and putting their colored thread in place.

She convulsed as they played hooky with her heart, her body going to shock as they twisted her heart into pieces, brutally murdering her attempts to flee.

...

*Your friends, your family, your loved ones, all of them will die at the hands of us.*

Mako didn't look away this time as the Life Fiber noose over the fresh gallows now hung the dead corpse of Sanageyama. Brutally

whipped before being put to hang to his death, he was a bloody mess of hanging skin and dripping blood. She couldn't blink for she feared the Life Fibers would bring him back in his current condition. Once the image of Sanageyama faded, leaving the gallows to build now to four bodies, she blinked and let the forceful shakes from her bottled emotions free. She had watched Nonon's brutal torture of her hands being torn from their sockets and then watching her hang, Iori's skin being ripped to shreds by Life Fibers and then hung, her brother's drowning torture and then hanging, and now Sanageyama's inhuman whipping and hanging. She felt her heart barely beat in her chest, now drowned in her despair and anger.

'Ira Gamagoori, Ryuuko Matoi'

"No... NO NOT THEM!" Mako launched from her spot and ran from the wooden stage only to find herself forced to her knees in front of it. Unable to move, Mako stared up in fear at the wooden burial ground about to add two more bodies. Gamagoori and Ryuuko appeared on the stage in chains and rags. Both looked like ragged hell but were not bloodied or bruised like those before them. Still something horrible was to happen and Mako fought against her binds, screaming for her two friends facing their deaths at the whim of the Life Fibers. They did not look at her until Mako's voice grew shrill and desperate. Gamagoori lifted his head and locked his gaze on her. He smiled briefly before breaking the moment and returning his eyes to the ground. Mako yelled for them until she lost her voice and sobbed as the disembodied voice came back to announce their punishments.

'Ira Gamagoori and Ryuuko Matoi are guilty of resisting our control and rebelling against our kind. They are guilty of being closest to our prisoner and therefore shall forego their respective pre-death tortures. They shall die by...'

Mako's heart barely beat. The voice was purposely stalling to bring the room to maximum tension and pressure it could stand before blowing. The continued silence continued building tension and

anticipation to its peak before it chirped back to life, the alien voice sounding excited.

'Beheading.'

"NO! NO, NO, NO! RYUUKO, SENPAI, PLEASE FIGHT!"

The voice had made its choice. Wooden blocks appeared before them, weapons made of Life Fibers hovering above them ready to ax off a victim's head. Gamagoori and Ryuuko did not resist the punishment or judgement, simply following orders like dolls on strings. The hovering axes parted and made room for the approaching victims, their blades audibly humming in anticipation. Mako struggled harder against her restraints, trying to yell but her voice was now barely above a whisper. They wouldn't hear her. They knelt before the blocks, heads still hung in submission to the law of the Life Fibers. Mako struggled more, trying to get their attention again. This time, she got a smile from Ryuuko and a whisper of a word before she lay her head and neck across the dug out notch in the block.

"Don't cry," Ryuuko whispered to her as the weapons rose up. Gamagoori looked unfazed by the approaching fall of the blade, offering a look of kindness before closing his eyes, "and fight back."

The axes came down in their planned swoops, easily slicing through their necks and sending their heads toward Mako, the dead, bleeding heads staring at her with eyes without light. Mako's tears fell harder and her hoarse cries grew wilder when she noticed that they were both smiling. The stage, weapons and their lifeless bodies included, vanished into the threaded background, leaving only her and the decapitated heads of her friends. Around her lay those who went before Ryuuko and Gamagoori, their bodies the way they were when they hanged, the imprint of the rope around their neck dark and visible. Mako was in her graveyard, staring at the unearthed remains of friends that did not deserve such gruesome early deaths.



Mako's tears dried as she looked back at the heads. No tears, no sorrow. It's a game. Fight back. Fight them. FIGHT!

...

*Wipe her subconscious of this. This will work. Torture her mind, the subconscious, until she breaks, dies or resists in the fights then wipe it for a clean slate. Do your job.*

Mako did not know what went on within the deepest regions of her mind, never once discovering the pile upon pile of horror scenarios played out to torture her until she broke without a fight. She simply slept her time of imprisonment away, tucked into a tight ball, her arms wrapped securely around her legs. Suspended over the void of endless red threads by Life Fibers poked into dozens of places on her, Mako was blissfully sleeping away the torture her COVER took to doing for fun. Ever so often she would twitch, feeling something shock her from her brain but it would fade quickly. Her sleep was dreamless, keeping her simply in a state of stasis until something happened or the COVER took everything she had for it.

A deep rumble broke through the silent environment, the COVER ceasing his toying with her mind to fight. Mako continued on in her sleep, unaware that the COVER lost in the battle, and something was pulling her. She winced as threads snapped out of her skin, one by one, by a force pulling her out of the COVER. The last Life Fibers to go were the bundle built up that connected to her nervous system through her spine. It detached violently but did not leave a mark, and she winced again as brightness bloomed behind her closed eyes. She felt like she was flying, not floating like she had, but soaring through the air, rotating around like before. Warm, soft, human hands came around her and her flying ceased. Was she free at least?

Mako opened her eyes, and found her freedom in the arms of Gamagoori.

# From Bloody Beginnings

***Picture Inspiration/Personal Prompt: The birth of their child in a not-so-pretty, semi-realistic way in the one way they did not want it to happen.***

---

"Ira! IRA! IRRA! Something's wrong, IRA!"

Mako held on to her pregnant stomach for dear life as pain ripped through her body, blood-tinted water surrounded her as she knelt on the floor of their large bathroom, recently out of the shower and only clad in a loose tan shirt. She did not expect the amount of pain that simply tore through her abdomen and up her spine, alarms going off everywhere in her body as her baby pushed to be free. She yelled out as another sharp contraction hit her, and blinked away her tears as they fell. This wasn't right at all, and Gamagoori wasn't here yet. She wasn't due yet, not for another two weeks. Was her child dying, was she dying? Did something bad happen to her without her knowing? She reached down between her legs and felt for anything unusual. Her hand returned bloodied, and Mako knew then that she had to deliver now or else she could risk her life and her child's. She drew out what little strength wasn't strangled by the pain and let a last roaring cry erupt from her throat.

"IRA GAMAGOORI!"

She fought against her pain-filled body and leaned against the toilet as Gamagoori came rushing in like a madman, kneeling down in front of her and quickly figuring out what was happening. He had her slowly lean back against the outside of the tub to leverage her enough to have her able to prop her legs open. He quickly shed his shirt off and placed it over her lower half, using it for a makeshift cover for her to avoid seeing what was to happen. She could barely see him through her torrent of tears, but saw that he was working as quickly as he could to help her through this. She spread her legs

apart and shifted more on to her tailbone, trying her best to fight through the pain and stabbing and have her child. Gamagoori was ready in the place of honor between her legs, primed underneath the cover that would block her sight from the gory procedure, ready to help where he could. She wiped her tears away, gripped the tub behind her with one hand and death-gripped Gamagoori's offered hand with the other. She sharply took in a breath, and bared down as hard as she could to push, a scream ripping from her throat. Something was tearing, she could feel something tear as she pushed. Gamagoori suddenly let a string of curses out and took back his hand, working quickly to check the damage.

"Mako, keep going now!"

Mako whimpered, but did keep going with great difficulty, baring down when she could take the waves of pain hitting her as she attempted to bring her child to the world on the floor of their brand new home bathroom. Gamagoori's hands and eyes never left underneath the cover, and soon said cover was splattered with blood. The tiles below them stained red from her womb as the process went on for who knows how long. She continued to push until she couldn't feel her body do it anymore, all her nerves numbed to a point she feared meant no return. Gamagoori's hands were at work underneath the cover, one coming out to wipe the sweat beading on his forehead bright red. He was whispering something, but Mako could not make it out. She went for another long, drawn-out push. Something was pulling on her womb, something felt like it was tied to it and trying to forcibly pull it by its feet.

"Ira, it hurts, it hurts" Mako moaned. Gamagoori grunted, his hands still working at her lower regions, being the doctor they needed most.

"Mako. Just keep pushing, okay? We're almost done. I can feel his head. One more!"

Mako could feel the hard ceramic beneath her hand crack as she gripped the tub harder and bared down hard enough to probably kill someone with her vaginal muscles. She let her roar-like scream out

like a siren, her teeth mashing together right after her scream ended. She kept the push going for as long as she could and breathed for a few moments before going again, this time finally dropping off and slumping against the tub in a numb dazed state, breathing enough to stay awake as she felt her womb finally give in and let her child free into the world, and Gamagoori pull out from underneath her makeshift barrier their bloodied newborn child still bound to her body through the umbilical cord. Gamagoori worked quickly on finding scissors while trying his best to clear the baby's airways so he could breathe. A moment later, the baby coughed out water and let roar a cry to shake the heavens.

Mako let her eyes shed happy tears as her baby took its first breaths. Gamagoori searched around him and picked up Mako's abandoned towel from her previous shower before her painful labor began, and wrapped their child within it, taking time to cut the umbilical cord with the scissors he found under the sink. Mako reached out for their child, asking in a wavering voice to hold him. Gamagoori slid up next to her and set the towel-bound child, now cleaned of most of the blood, in her arms. She tucked him up against her chest with both arms, looking down at her little blond-haired newborn son. She felt Gamagoori slowly pull her between his legs to let her relax against something not hard and uncomfortable. The moment she got settled within the hold of him, she leaned her weight on to him, closing her eyes and trying to catch some air into her weak lungs and let her heart and body rest for a moment.

Gamagoori rested one hand underneath the shirt he sacrificed for her, and curled his arm around her, his hand on the back of her head, blood on his hands running into her hair. They did not care right now about the blood, or where it was. Gamagoori let his tears he kept down fall without remorse, letting himself cry silently as Mako recovered from birth with their child in her arms, peacefully sleeping away the silent but tense moment. Mako had survived an early at-home natural birth with no medical help or doctor. Gamagoori helped her give birth by helping get the baby out safely and making sure that she did not hurt herself or the baby during the

entire hing, his hands tainted with the blood that came before and after their blond-haired newborn.

"Mako..."

Slowly opening her eyes and tilting her head up to him, Mako whispered her soft acknowledgment, her eyes tired but happy. She had gone through hell, met the devil, played tag with him and ventured back out with a grand reward worth the pain, and she still held her usual cheeriness in one form or another. Her eyes spoke the happiness and joy that she could not vocally give.

"We made it..." he told her, his right hand that cupped her head brushing the small fuzzy blond hair of their child, "We all made it out alive."

"The... the three of us." Mako whispered back, a smile somehow finding its way back to her face. She rested her weary head back on his bare chest, her child tucked to her chest securely. She raised her free hand to brush against the side of their child's sticky face, catching the soft green eyes of their child.

"Happy Birthday, little one."

# Mirror of Youth, Part 1

***Prompt: How about a drabble where Mako or Gama turns into a kid?***

---

"What the actual fuck is going on?" Nonon exclaimed, looking at Satsuki with such a bewildered expression. The rest of the Elite, including Iori, were still shell-shocked in their seats. No one had any clue what had happened and how it happened, and no one knew how to fix it. Satsuki had jumped to the cause when Sanageyama had found out about it, and now had it calmed down in her lap.

They did not expect to find a younger Gamagoori this morning. Or ever, really.

It seems somehow, by some force, Gamagoori had shrunk from nineteen to approximately around the ages of six to eight, and had no memory of any of them. He was back to where he was when he was that age; scared, alone and already scarred by bullies. He nearly fainted from fear when Sanageyama had to chase him around the room just to make sure the young Gamagoori didn't do something he shouldn't. After bouts of crying because he had no clue where he was and everyone was big and scary and yelling at him, and calling him names, he found comfort in Satsuki's soft spoken words and gentle grasp and slept in her lap.

"It seems something has made our Disciplinary Chairmen more than ten years younger" Inumuta answered, entering in observations into his current log for this event. "Somehow during the night, Gamagoori returned to a younger age, estimated between five and nine, though strongly leaning into age seven. He has no recollection of any of us in any form, but he seemed to easily warm up to Lady Satsuki without trouble. I still don't have enough data to figure out how to turn him or how to give back his memories so we don't have to worry about spooking him again"

"Geez! Who knew the Toad had such a painful past?" Nonon exclaimed. Satsuki started to run her hands through Gamagoori's hair as he slept, keeping him under the unconscious spell.

"Nonon, for now do not call him that. Any actions that spell possible harassment or bullying are to cease until Gamagoori is back to normal, understood?"

"Yes, Lady Satsuki" "Understood" "Understood, Lady Satsuki"

Satsuki nodded at their response, and looked down at Gamagoori. She had heard tales of his past before but seeing it in an unorthodox situation led her to fully believe that he had a rough childhood. It explained a lot about his character and how it had evolved through the years. Now back at this age, he was definitely smaller and nowhere near close to the size he was during middle school. She continued to softly pet Gamagoori's hair and watched as his tight muscles slowly relaxed, and he felt him sigh in relief. She smiled at the small child before locking eyes again with Inumuta.

"You haven't figured out why at this age he takes to me, Inumuta?" she asked. Inumuta pulled up Gamagoori's bio and read through it quickly.

"Not exactly. Maybe someone in his past? He never agreed to explain his past so the data I have on him is supremely limited"

"He was born mixed-race. Half-Japanese, half-American" Satsuki explained, getting everyone's attention. "He got subjected to bullying for it. He has darker skin than us, and blond hair. He began his life being bullied based on racist beliefs. That is why he feared all of you, because you were displaying behavior similar to what violence he had been exposed to during this time"

"Still does not explain why he takes to you" Iori stated, looking through Inumuta's log to see if there really was anything on figures Gamagoori looked to in his youth.

"His father was an American soldier stationed in Japan, but he apparently left the family before his birth. I must resemble his mother, and from what he has told me, she had to leave him to his uncle due to trouble with finance and living situations"

The Elite let the information simmer and settle. It made sense, and seeing that they had all revealed parts of their pasts to Lady Satsuki, they could confirm it as truth. Nonon sighed and settled on her couch, looking at Gamagoori and Satsuki, seeing Gamagoori squirm a moment and frown before settling back into the comfort of sleep. Satsuki could not babysit him the entire time this happened and she knew that if she let him stay within the care of her Elite, they would simply try to manipulate him in some way. She did not doubt their skills and leadership but she felt a duty to protect him in this vulnerable time. She needed someone he could connect with that could protect him in the safety of the tower for now.

She had an idea, a perfect person for the job she required filled, and summoned Soroi to make the call to get them in quickly.

"So what are we going to do once he wakes up?" Sanageyama asked, "We can't exactly avoid another screaming incident now that he pegs us as bullies."

Satsuki rested a hand on top of Gamagoori's head momentarily. "That's why I'm pulling in some help."

"Help?" Nonon questioned, "Help from whom?"

---

"So you want me to babysit little Gamagoori while he's like this?! Are you sure you got the right person for this?"

Mako had no clue how she got chosen out of hundreds of thousands of students to come into the secret insides of the Academy and babysit someone. She didn't expect that Gamagoori somehow turned into a little kid but she had to admit he looked cute being all small and adorable.



"I'm sure of it. Simply make sure he stays safe and does not hurt himself or his surroundings. We will be back as quickly as possible with a solution to this issue." Satsuki informed Mako, who suddenly procured a blanket and draped it over the still slumbering Gamagoori, who rested alone in Satsuki's chair of honor. Mako tucked it under his chin and smiled as he snuggled into it, sinking peacefully into the chair.

"We will be back, Mankanshoku. Do not leave his sight." The Elite Four followed Satsuki as they exited the top floor, leaving Mako and young Gamagoori alone. Mako squatted down beside the chair, looking curiously at Gamagoori as he slept soundless, a smile on his cute adorable face. She poked at one of his cheeks and watched as he curled his hands up to the touched cheek and opened his eyes, the steel grey she knew now a lighter, more innocent shade of soft grey. He blinked for a moment, keeping his eyes on her before sitting up and rubbing at his eyes.

When he truly woke up, and looked at Mako, he tried to scoot back into the chair as far from her as possible. He clutched the blanket in his hands tightly, fear showing in his eyes.

"No, no, no it's okay, I'm not a bully!" Mako cried, holding her hands up in surrender. Tears were forming in Gamagoori's eyes, and Mako's heart shrieked that she was making him cry, "Don't cry, I would never hurt you."

Mako found hot tears building in her eyes, her vision blurring. Barely into her duty as babysitter and she made him cry. She felt them fall, and couldn't stop them. She failed already at her task. Gamagoori already did not like her, barely a few minutes after seeing her.

Tiny hands touched her face before they brushed away her tears without a hesitation. Mako opened her eyes and found Gamagoori leaning over to her, his hands rubbing her tears away even though his tears fell in tiny streams. Mako could not believe the caution in his touch as he made sure no more tears fell down her face. He poked her nose once he made sure every last tears got wiped away,

and Mako giggled at the cute gesture. She went to wipe his tears, but he flinched away. She withdrew until Gamagoori returned and let her slowly wipe his little tears away, tugging at one ear before smiling at him.

"I'm sorry for that. You started crying and I didn't want to make you cry..." Mako told him.

"It's okay." he said softly. Mako gasped at the pure softness of his voice, so used to the steel slap his voice usually provided. His child voice was like being enveloped by a cloud.

"What's your name?" he asked her, trying to tug his blanket up over his shoulders, but couldn't free it from under him. Mako offered her help and picked him up, pulling the blanket out from under him as she settled him into the crook of her free arm. Gamagoori suddenly latched to her shoulder, snuggling into it like her shoulder became a pillow. She giggled and told him that he acted like a magnet, getting a chuckle from him. She got him to release her and settled him back on the chair, blanket draped over his shoulders like a mighty cape.

"I'm Mako Mankanshoku. I know your name, too."

"Ira Gamagoori."

"Yep! I really like that name."

"But why? It's attached to a body that no one likes."

Mako's happiness fled for a moment, rage building in her in place of it. The self-loathing and put-me-downs he just committed made her sad, angry, and disappointed. Was this really how Gamagoori was as a child?

"Why do you say that?"

Gamagoori's pulled the blanket tighter over his body. "Everyone laughs at me. They say mean things about me and pick on me. The

bigger boys hurt me."

Mako's heart shattered. Gamagoori was a bully survivor? He was hurt and hit by kids at this age?

"You look perfect, Ira." Mako told him, brushing the building tears in his eyes, "And you have looked that way forever. Those mean bullies are wrong to hurt you. The way you look, the way you talk, the way you hold yourself. It's all you, and it's perfect. Never believe anything else. You're perfect the cute way you are!"

Gamagoori couldn't stop the tears as he launched into Mako for a hug, catapulting him off the chair and into her arms. He dug his hands into her shirt as he sobbed, making sure he stayed where he landed. Mako smiled sadly at him, wrapping her arms around him.

"No one should bully you for your color, or who you are. A beautiful person like you shouldn't hurt in such a bad way."

Gamagoori sniffled and curled up in her embrace, hugging her as tight as he could. "Thank you, Mako."

"You're welcome! It's okay, Ira. You're safe here. Don't worry."

---

Satsuki and company returned later that day, as night fell over the Tokyo Bay, with their solution in hand, finding Mako and Gamagoori fast asleep on one of the Elite Four couches. Gamagoori tucked himself close to Mako, his small body curled up against Mako's chest while Mako had an arm draped over him. The blanket Mako had earlier draped over them, completing their make-shift bed on the couch.

"Oi, Mankanshoku." Sanageyama whispered, poking Mako until her eyes fluttered open. She gasped and went to move but Sanageyama stopped her. Mako looked down at Gamagoori and relaxed back into place, slowly moving until she wormed out of his hold and off the

couch. She adjusted the blanket back over him and whispered her good nights.

"Thank you Mankanshoku for looking after him." Satsuki thanked her. Mako quickly bowed and thank Satsuki for trusting her with such a task. After swift but comforting pleasantries passed around the group, Mako left the Elite and their queen to their business in their castle, returning to the Academy grounds and leaving for home with Ryuuko at her side, questioning her about what was up within the secret tower only the Elite could reach.

The next morning, Gamagoori woke up to the surprise of tears falling down his face. Memories of yesterday's horrific mishap came to life, replying each and every detail in crystal clear picture. Every moment with the Elite finding, every moment within Satsuki's arms.

Every instance with Mako as she comforted his seven-year old self and making him believe in the beauty of himself.

He sat up slowly, rubbing the tears away. The warmth brought from the memories with Mako made his insides jump, but it a way far from negative. Mako's valiant attempts to keep him calm ad happy made his look on her ever more positive. Her belief in him and his being made him over-joyous. Her successful winning over him as she made him believe in himself and not the bullies that plagued his childhood.

He gave a soft chuckle as he pushed his hair back from his eyes. His heart pounded in his chest as he relived yesterday, his mind switching emotions quickly, resulting in Gamagoori fleeing into his bed again, fighting invading thoughts involving them taking care of a child and Mako being the perfect mother. He scolded his imagination for such rude and careless thoughts.

"You amaze me again Mankanshoku. I wonder if you will ever cease the never-ending surprises."

# Sweet, Sweet Confessions

***Prompt: A story about Mako admitting her feelings to Gamagoori instead of the other way around.***

---

Mako squirmed in the leather booth as she glanced down at her smartphone once again, turning it on and checking the time for the fourteenth time in less than five minutes. The time now stood at 4:56 pm. She turned it off again and sipped her shake absently, trying to calm the anxiousness settling in her gut. He would be here, if the information Inumuta snuck her was correct, in no more than five minutes on his way back home from college, ordering the same thing she indulged herself on at the moment, sometimes with added sweets seeing that this town-famous corner shop served a lot of indulgence foods.

Her phone buzzed, and she opened her inbox, reading the quick text from Inumuta.

*'He just left the building.'*

She quickly looked at the time. 5:01. She gave a shaky sigh and shut off her phone again, tapping her fingers on the base of her shake glass. Another couple sips and she hit the bottom, a soft disappointed sound escaping her. She waved over a bored-looking waitress and order one for herself and ordered Gamagoori's in advance, the waitress giving her a sly smile.

Mako tried not to react when she saw it, but it was impossible. She laughed and set off with the orders, telling her as she walked away that Gamagoori's order was on the house. Mako thanked her meekly, sighed deeply, and flopped her face on to the cold tabletop. Her face, still warm from her overactive blushing issue, felt nice on the cold top, but she knew she would have to sit up again.

Her phone buzzed as she looked up, and Mako's heart fired all pistons. She knew what the message would contain.

Gamagoori walked along the side of the building without noticing her, laptop bag in his right hand, wallet in the other. The chime above the door rang as he walked in and took his usual corner seat, two booths from where Mako sat. He set his bag down and started to move out when the waitress from earlier set his usual shake order in front of him.

"The girl a few booths over ordered for you. It's on the house."

Mako kept calm, shifting in her seat as Gamagoori tried to look around and over the top of the booths to find her, his mystery shake buyer. She admittedly sunk down in her place, hoping that he wouldn't come out of the booth to search, but she heard the squeal of leather, and she knew she could not hide. She quickly accepted her shake she ordered and drank away, trying to look interested in a pointless game of Fruit Ninja. She didn't need to look up to see that Gamagoori was heading her way, but she found herself doing so, ending her game and pulling her drink closer.

"Mankanshoku." Surprise snuck into his voice as he exclaimed her name.

Mako found enough peace to calm down, a smile appearing on her lips as she looked up toward him. "Hi Gamagoori!"

"What are you doing here, at this hour? I didn't realize you came here."

Mako swallowed, partly to finish her mouthful of chocolate shake but to also be done with the lump in her throat. "I've always wanted to try their smoothies, so I took some time to come here. Lucky me, I came at the right time and ran into you."

Gamagoori took a moment to look around, finding no one else around to lead him to whoever bought his drink. "Mankanshoku..."

were you the one to pay for my drink?"

Mako couldn't hold it together and blushed, trying to hide suddenly under the cover of a cough. Her response came out uneasy and rocky.

"Yep, yes I did."

Gamagoori's expression turned bewildered, his hands hitting the table as he tried to read Mako's face, only able to see the blushing mess she had become. He went to respond when Mako stood abruptly, grabbed her things, finished off her smoothie and maneuvered around him. He watched as she set a few dollars for a tip and ran out of the shop. Gamagoori did not run after her, unable to find any response to her sudden flee from the situation. Confusion settled in him, trying to figure out why the usually headstrong girl he knew began to look different.

He sighed at last, and grabbed his things and settled into Mako's empty booth, ordering a quick side sweet. The waitress looked at the door for a moment, before turning toward him.

"She was here for a while, if you want to know. Looking anxious and everything for some reason."

Gamagoori hummed, unable to understand now why Mako would come here, as if she knew his schedule, and what he ordered. He pushed his questions to the back of his mind, and continued on his usual after school routine.

---

"So?"

Mako flopped on their shared couch, turning over so her face was stuffed in the backrest. "I ran."

Ryuuko frowned, poking Mako's shoulder. "You ran."

"Yep."

"So he walked in..."

"Got the drink, found me, I fell apart and ran."

Ryuuko gently hit Mako's head. "You idiot, why would you run?!"

Mako moaned, flipping over to show Ryuuko her tear-cover face. "I don't know why, Ryuuko, I couldn't do it."

Mako jumped into Ryuuko's embrace, softly crying at her failure to admit her feelings. Ryuuko did as she had for the last few days and comforted Mako, returning to her tactics she picked up to calm her until she eventually cried herself out into exhaustion.

She sort of wished that she could simply tell Gamagoori that Mako had a huge crush on him and like likes him, but she promised Mako at the beginning of this string of failed attempts to admit her feelings that she would not speak a word of it to anyone, not even Satsuki. She kept her lips sealed of Mako's complicated plight, and helped her through the fallout once her plans fell out.

"Come on, Mako, stand up. We're going out." Ryuuko announced, pulling Mako to her feet and helping her wipe away her tears and snot with a procured rag.

"Where are we going?" Mako asked, wiping the last of her tears away and picking up her bag. Ryuuko looked over her shoulder as she paused in the doorway.

"We're going to find Gamagoori, come on. I'm personally helping you now."

---

Gamagoori didn't know what to expect as he waited on the corner outside the shop he relaxed in, ordered to meeting Ryuuko in a few minutes at this spot. With the tone she took, and the obvious reason



that fighting Ryuuko wouldn't end pretty, he obliged her demand. Luckily, the shop trusted him enough and he could eat outside in peace.

He saw Mako before he saw Ryuuko, and by the looks of it, her mission involved Mako. Mako tried to look ready for what was to happen, but he could tell by the tension evident in her form that she didn't want to do this in the slightest. He collected his quickly fraying thoughts as they approached, Ryuuko moving so that Mako could go ahead. They were far enough where he could not hear what they were whispering to each other, but from the sudden conflicting emotions coming from Mako, they were obviously at a stand-off about something.

Mako eventually gave in, letting out a large sigh before turning toward Gamagoori, walking up, and making the weirdest face he had ever seen. He watched said weird face turn scared, then anxious, and finally returning to calm-ish.

"It's alright, Mako. You got this." Ryuuko encouraged her, keeping some distance between her. Mako took in a deep breath and looked him in the eye before blushing.

"I really like you, Gamagoori! I like you much more than a friend! You're kind and caring to me, and have sacrificed a lot to keep me safe, and protect me when Ryuuko can't. I haven't been able to shake you from my thoughts for a while, and I hope with all my heart that you feel the same! Will you go out with me, Ira?!"

Gamagoori took a step back, blush exploding across his face from the emotional confession. Mako stood where she was, trying to keep a straight face as she waited for his response. He stuttered on his words as his crush, once pushed aside for him to continue his schooling and in the belief that Mako would not reciprocate his feelings, resurfaced in unyielding stabs to his heart. Mako's head started to fall as the silence dragged on, and Gamagoori knew he had to shove away his insecurity and speak his mind.

In the smallest voice you would ever hear from him, he responded. "I feel the same way, Mankanshoku."

Mako's head shot up, tears bouncing out of the corners of her eyes. "EEEEH?! Y-you do?!"

"Yes, and... I accept your date proposal, b-but before that I... owe you a smoothie. Care to join me?"

Mako's eyes lit up. She wiped her pointless tears away and nodded, following Gamagoori inside the sweets shop once more. Ryuuko couldn't help but laugh as the two shields of the Kiryuuin sisters finally decided to break the thin ice between them.

Ryuuko quickly snapped a few pictures for evidence, and plotted her route to Satsuki and Inumuta. They would love to hear and see this revelation.

## Four Months and Waiting

***Personal Prompt/Music Inspiration: Say something, I'm losing my mind. Oh please just open your eyes and say hi. Sooner or not, time will fly by, and all I can do is sit and cry.***

---

"I came back again, like I promised. How have you been since yesterday? You look better, you got blood in your cheeks! You feel warmer too."

Mako smiled softly, her hands wringing themselves dry in her lap. She knew she wouldn't get an answer, she hadn't in a long time, but she knew her words reached him. She would sometimes see movement, and everyone told her it was good sign.

"I'm doing not so well. It's been rough, and school has been near torturous but I've been going everyday, and finishing every piece of work. I thought you would like to know that I haven't slept in class in a long time, not even for a moment! I even joined a few clubs, but they kicked me out because I apparently don't meet their standards, which is mean of them but it is their school... I'm the new girl."

Mako rubbed at her eyes, willing her tear ducts not to start flowing out tears at this moment. Enough tears had been shed, she didn't need to waste what little hydration she held.

"I know that you'd be upset with the new school transfer but my family can't find a stable place to stay yet. I know I should accept Satsuki's kindness but I want our family to be able to stand on its own but it's so hard. We're doing worse than the slums, b-but we're together, right?"

She wrapped her arms around herself. "I want all of us together, happy and healthy with enough money., but we need to make our own, not take Satsuki's money. I'm afraid that we'll end up greedy

and nasty again. Do you think it'll happen again? Or would we use it well, and finally have the life we dreamed about?"

She got no answer as usual, and she looked out of the open windows, the Tokyo Bay glistening in the distance. She could faintly make out the circular spot that was Honnouji Academy, now abandoned and in the process of being torn down.

"Your stuff is safe in the house Satsuki bought you, and you can live here, or with your family in Yokosuka. You're set, safe, and ready..."

Mako's tears finally fell, and she let them fall with a rough cry. It hurt in her chest, but she let the rough cries free. She clutched her pounding chest and rested her head on the bed, her hands desperately clutching what she could grab, an unmoving hand.

"Y-you and me could go see them... if you would only wake up... please, just please, wake up."

The door opened behind her, but she paid no attention to the person who stood in the threshold. She cried softly at first until she was loudly bawling, her visitor hugging her close from behind. It happened every time, as the silence hit her heart like a drum, relentless in its beats.

"Come on Mako, it's time." Ryuuko told her softly as she helped Mako up, brushing away some of her tears, "They're trying again, so we have to bail for now. They'll call us when they finished."

Mako sniffled, still brushing tears away. She knew she had to leave, the procedure had to be done. It was their only hope now. Mako turned back to the medical bed, and tucked her hand with his, her lips gracing his forehead briefly.

"Please... give me a moment, Ryuuko, okay?"

Ryuuko nodded, knowing what the brunette would do, and closed the door behind her as she waited in the hallway for her friend. Mako

held his hand quietly as she kissed his forehead, hoping that she would feel him move, see him open his eyes. When she looked down at his face, nothing had changed. Tears fell on to his cheeks as she cried once again.

"Ira... it would be a great birthday present... if you would just open your eyes, and say hello to me one more time..."

# One Fight Never to Remember

***Prompt: How about Gamagoori taken over by Nui and the Life Fibers, and being forced to attack Mako?***

---

Ryuuko couldn't cut through Nui's basting threads quick enough, Mako knew that for certain. If she had, no one would be fighting right then, but she missed one damned thread, the thick thread escaping the Scissor Blade and continuing on its destined path. Mako knew that she would have to fight, but she did not want to fight at all.

Gamagoori came bellowing out of the dust to attack her, now under the control of Nui as her Life Fiber thread wrapped around his mind. The emptiness of his now rabid eyes, the ferocity unlike his usual self, it scared her. Darkened skin, Life Fiber's visible, and a goal of attacking her.

But why her, and not Ryuuko, or Satsuki?

She quickly ran as Gamagoori went for another attack, his fist slamming into the ground like a bomb, earth and dirt spraying up behind her heels. Without a uniform, she was doomed, and with his abilities obviously intensified, if she fell under his attacks... there wouldn't be much left of her. She hid behind a high barrier, shivering in her shoes. She was afraid of him. For the first time in a long, long time, she was afraid of what he would do.

"Come on, Mankanshoku, don't make this so easy..."

She yelped, unable to hold it back. His voice was *wrong, demented, WRONG*. It wasn't the senpai she knew, it wasn't him! Shadow fell over her, and when she looked up, all she saw was him hovering over her like a vulture.

A predator spotting his already-dead prey.

She seized for a moment before leaping out-of-the-way of another attack, her ankle twisting violently under her as she moved. The loss of one foot had her skidding on the pavement, tears falling as she weakly reached for the damaged ankle, the limb almost twisted the wrong way. She tried to sit up, only to cry out as she tried to use her now useless right foot. She struggled to move any further, Gamagoori's heavy footfalls coming closer. Her tears fell fast as she crawled, broken glass embedding in her arms and body, unable to avoid them as she moved with all her strength to get away, but it was not enough. The large shadow of Gamagoori fell over her, and she turned to face him as his hand grabbed for her collar.

She couldn't fight when he reached her, pulling her off the ground and throwing her against the wall nearest them, her back snapping against the brick. She struggled against his hold, but without her strength she was at his mercy. She opened her eyes and tears poured down her cheeks, and gasped as she finally saw Gamagoori face-to-face.

Despite the greyscale he was in, and the sickly glow of Life Fiber's, tears fell from his eyes, his grip tightening as he pushed her harder against the building. Mako hissed as the back of her head bounced, but she held together, her cries swallowed down but her tears falling in rivers.

"G-Gamagoori... please stop this." Mako begged, "You can beat her."

He scowled, and moved his grip to her neck, choking her as he rose her higher off the ground, her feet kicking as she was strangled, the air in her lungs dying away.

"G-Gama... goori... please..."

Gamagoori's tears fell harder, but he did not concede his attack. Both hands wrapped around her neck, but the pressure already applied did not increase. Mako choked violently as she kicked

harder, weakly crying out as pain hit her from every angle. She could barely breath, but she had to keep fighting.

"Sen... pai..."

She coughed weakly, and as her last quick breaths came, her eyes starting to roll back in her head, his hands let her go, instead wrapping around her and slowly let her down to the ground. She coughed violently once she was on her bottom, trying to take in as much as she could to help her recover. She didn't realize that Gamagoori was curled over her, his tears falling on her back. Once able to breathe easier, she looked up at him, amazed at what she saw.

He still was captured by the Life Fiber in his head, but his will kept all orders dead. He instead shielded her from view, COVER suits flying overhead. His eyes, unfocused and empty still, continued to let tears fall without stop. Mako took it upon herself to do so, and felt him flinch as her warm thumbs brushed under his eyes.

"Senpai..."

He hissed, his hands curling tightly against the wall of the building. His fight still continued, and he was starting to lose. Mako braced for the incoming attack, and it came with unpredictable results. Gamagoori pinned her to the ground, one fist raised up, ready to strike her, yet it stayed hovered in the air. As his hand crushed her shoulder, she whimpered under the pain and slow breaking of her bones, and finally she saw the change.

Gamagoori's eye's focused, and returned to their beautiful steel grey color. He hiccupped, tears falling again as he shook, his pinning arm moving to above her shoulder.

"I'm sorry..." he sobbed, his fist falling to his side, "I'm sorry."

Mako cringed as the bones in her shoulder did not align right, knowing that something was either broken, bruised, or fractured. She



looked up smiling at him, causing him to flinch as he saw it stretch her cheeks. She reached up once more, brushing away tears.

"I'm sorry! I'm sorry..."

Mako did not respond, simply brushing away his tears as the freedom he had fought for slipped away again, and she was given enough time to drag herself free, using the building to stand. Gamagoori, now back under Nui's control, threw a punch at her, sending her back on her back, but she did not stop. She sat up with a cry of anguish, scooting away as Gamagoori stalked onward her, but she did not feel fear.

"I'm not scared.." Mako told herself as Gamagoori grabbed her again by the collar, his other hand raising to hit her. She gave him a fierce smile, hoping that the Gamagoori trapped inside would see her.

"I'm sorry, Senpai..."

She sent her better leg into his gut, aiming her toes right into his ribs. The glass embedded within the leather of the shoe pierced into him, and stayed there, sending him back with a howl as glass tore into his chest. Mako struggled to move to him as he fell to his knees, thin streams of blood dripping down his midsection. She grabbed the loose pipe on the ground, and with her best effort rose it above her head.

Her fear returned. She couldn't do it. She didn't mean to shove glass into his chest. She didn't want to hurt him, she didn't. She cried out, her tears falling once more as she dropped her blunt weapon. She knelt in front of him as he slowly rose again, blood marring his face.

"You..."

Mako dropped her arms, and closed her eyes. She couldn't fight anymore. She had no strength, her body hurt and broken. This was the end.

"I'm... so sorry..."

Mako gasped as his arms went around her again, and Mako finally realized what had happened to him. Part of his Mind Stitching had been filed away, freeing him enough to act on his own. She slowly moved her good arm to his hand, her hand digging for the Stitching, snagging the edge of one shredded cord, and pulled up, trying to rip the Life Fibers out of his mind.

"STOP!"

With one final tug, it ripped out of his mind, sending her on to a bed of rock on her back. Gamagoori fell with her, bracing himself in time to hvoer over her with his arms to her sides.

Mako let her tears fall, and hugged his neck, her words trapped behind her cries.

"Senpai..."

Gamagoori gave a choked cry, his head resting on her shoulder as his cried, unable to respond or talk to her. She knew he wouldn't be able to, the horrors of his actions swallowing him whole.

"You're forgiven... you're forgiven, Senpai. It's okay."

# The Broken Cradle

***Prompt: First pregnancy ending as a miscarriage.***

---

Mako laid in her assigned medical bed, staring at the door anxiously. Her results were due any moment now, and they could lean either way and it scared her. Gamagoori wouldn't be able to make it here for another five minutes, and those five minutes could change every plan they had for the next four years. If her results came back with the confirmation of a miscarriage...

She curled up into herself momentarily. The thought of losing her baby, her first little human within her, stung like fire. The news of her pregnancy was a miracle. They had tried for months, but with no luck until finally her body allowed an egg to fertilize. Her body, her baby, couldn't decide to give up now. Her arms went around her stomach, urging the little life inside to be alive for its loving parents.

The doors slid open, and Mako hugged right into Gamagoori's chest, little tears escaping her eyes. He wordlessly brushed them away and sat on the edge of her bed, holding her hand tightly as they waited for their doctor.

"No news yet?" he asked softly. Mako shook her head.

"No, and it's making it hard to breathe. I just hope it's not... n-not... what if it is?" Mako's tears fell faster now, her hands working quickly to wipe them away.

Gamagoori hesitated. "I... don't know. I honestly have no idea, Mako."

She whimpered, her cries ending, but they still rested precariously on their perches in the corners of her eyes. If the news was bad, they would immediately fall to their dooms. Heavy silence filled the

room as they waited, and the tension did not help Mako relax one moment. The door finally opened after ten minutes of anxious waiting, and the doctor kept a neutral look to avoid spooking them, which Mako was thankful for.

"So... what were the results?" Mako asked, sitting up a bit more.

"The results... I'm sorry, Ms. Gamagoori but-"

Mako did not need to hear the rest. She miscarried. Her baby, the first human she would ever make, was dead. Gone, wasted away before it could survive on its own. The child they worked so hard to make simply withered away inside of her, and she could do nothing about it. They were looking at her, both her husband and the doctor. She didn't know why.

"Mako?"

Her tears spilled, and she broke down. She didn't care what they said, her heart, along with their dead child, broke into pieces. There was no stopping her anguish and sadness, and the only thing Gamagoori could do was hold her close as she cried for their loss.

"The good news is, Ms. Gamagoori, is that it is a complete miscarriage. The... the baby has already left your placenta. You don't have to worry about any further complications in that area."

Mako calmed herself enough to listen to him, although all she wanted to do was crawl up, cry herself to sleep, and eat until she accepted the loss.

"You'll also be able to try for it again in a few weeks time. Fast, I know, but the baby was expelled it seemed earlier than first thought. As for the... emotional toll... I can offer you groups and people who can help you through this, if you would like. I know you needed better news than this, and as a father who has helped a wife through two miscarriages, I wish I could have seen you through your pregnancy."

Mako wiped away her tears, a smile somehow breaking through her cloak of despair.

"You will get to see me through one, because we're going to try again until it works. I would though like those groups, if you don't mind."

# Murder At Its Coldest

***Personal Prompt/Music Inspiration:*** *Paradise lost, we fall into the fire, and we see what hell we rained down. As insanity dies away, and sanity desperately prays, we crumble like the dead bodies around us.*

***Snapped!AU.***

---

Blood. The glorious crimson liquid that filled every victim she sliced in to, the lifeforce of the living that exploded out of their wounds as they hung with their intestines dangling like a noose. The coppery taste of it and the rotten smell made the scene even more decanting and magical. Of course the cops couldn't catch her standing in the pool of blood beside the hanging body, but she could see her artwork from her spot on the roof overhead.

She picked up her machete, and made her way toward the roof exit, wiping the blood on her blade on to her jeans. It would look like an accident more than a murder, so she could easily walk out on the streets without issue. The walk down the winding stairs was easy, giving her time to put her blade away in her bag and to readjust her hair to look a little more tame. As she stepped out through the back exit, she smiled, brushing back a bit of hair as she skipped to the main road, joining into the crowd of people as police swarmed the alleyway, heading toward the open door.

Four times now she's shed blood on the streets and the cops still have no idea who or what did it, and she liked it that way. The urge and need to kill grew every moment she wasn't wielding a blade, chopping down idiots or evildoers that threatened her friends, her family, anyone close to her. Those who got in their way were dead by sundown.

She had one more stop to do, but this would hurt her more than her victim. Her target... he's a special case. Anyone who had tried to help her in the past died violently. He has done miracles with her, being kind and calm while she raged on and on about the assholes on her to-die list, trying to help her find new solutions, trying to return her to who she was before the incident.

She knew she would never return to be normal Mako again. His efforts would die with him.

His apartment was open for her as always. She walked in with her best neutral expression, trying her best to keep it when he walked in and noticed her arrival. She smiled for him, as she would in his last moments, and accepted the hug he gave her. She would miss these. She never got them earlier in their friendship, but as he tried to console her and her raging anger, it became common. They were warm, and full, his large chest the best place to think in her times of crisis. She did not expect tears to run down her face, however. He went to dry them, and she saw her window.

She cried out as her blade went smoothly through his rib cage, the tip just an inch from his heart. Blood splattered against the floor and her legs, but the smell disgusted her. He did not move, he did not howl. He simply looked down at her hand gripping the hilt of the blade buried in his chest. Mako hiccuped as her tears fell harder, but she resisted finishing him, hesitation locking her limbs in place.

"Why?"

Mako whimpered. The single word he spoke stabbed her like the blade inside him. The soft, gentle word he spoke, he sounded like he knew this would happen.

"I-I can't be fixed, Ira! Nothing works, you're... you're wasting your perfectly normal life with a murderer! No one... one one can save me... so I'm making sure your efforts die!"

Gamagoori gave a rough sigh, his eyes showing pain, sadness... and happiness. "You're crying."

Mako sniffled, sobbing for a moment. "I know, and I don't know why! Stabbing... hurting, killing, it's so easy yet it hurts to hurt you. I... why is it so hard to do this then, damn it?! Why can't I plunge this blade into your heart?"

Gamagoori smiled, a thin line of blood dribbling out of his mouth. "It's okay, Mako."

Mako sobbed again. "And... and you are always nice to me, thinking that I could be the old me, but I... I never will... murder is in my blood, you're... oh god, please I can kill you, why can't I..."

"Mako..."

"DAMN IT ALL!"

Mako ground her teeth, and pulled the blade out of him, standing back as he fell to his knees. She fell alongside him, throwing her blade away and slowly leaning him on his back. The pain in her chest doubled as she watched Gamagoori struggle to breathe, his hands pressing on his chest. Mako ripped the bottom of her jeans, pressing the thick fabric into the wound. She blinked her tears away, but they fell harder as she balanced his head on her knee, his eyes finding hers.

"God damn you, dammit. Don't you dare... please don't..."

He smiled again. "You changed... somehow, I got through to you."

Mako couldn't help but realize he was right. Ever now, as she fought to keep the dumb idiot who tried to help her alive, she knew he actually broke through. She would have never even stayed with him if he hadn't. She would have never cried, never hesitated, never would have allowed him so close if he hadn't finally found the old her.



"Y-you did... you did. You... please, don't you die on me, I'm..."

Gamagoori's eyes widened in surprise as the words almost made it out. Her bottom lip trembled as she fought herself, not knowing if she could actually speak words she had forgotten long ago. She closed her eyes, and relaxed for a moment, her conscious going crystal clear. The darkness receded.

"I'm... so sorry... that I stabbed you. I'll call someone, I'll take my dues, just don't fall asleep on me."

Gamagoori laughed. "So you stab someone to kill, then tell them to live? So indecisive..."

"Well screw you too, I'm sorry I finally... woke up after stabbing you."

Gamagoori sighed in relief, pressing the fabric deeper to help soak up blood. "Y-you have good aim. I think..I think I'll be okay. I should have... something to sew it up over near... my desk."

Mako rubbed her tears away, and gently let Gamagoori's head to the floor, and searched for the kit he talked about. She knew that her aim went through no other vital organs and cleanly went through his ribs to avoid any internal injuries. Her blade never pierced his heart, so he should be okay as long as she works quick, cleans it, and ensures he's doesn't bleed out or get an infection. She grabbed an unopened bottle for alcohol, as well as the box of sewing supplies she'd need.

Maybe after this... maybe he could forgive her and continue helping her.

# Supernatural Proceedings, Part 1

***Prompt: how about a gamako au where they're monsters? like werewolf, vampire, succubus, whatever you'd prefer.***

---

She liked poking at the funny fuzzy ears that poked out of the side of his head like antennae, watching them twitch under her unnatural cold until he clawed at her and forced her to retreat into the air. She was glad she could avoid his nails, she'd seen how much damage they could do, with her ability to levitate with the ease of a bird.

As a werewolf, he had an excellent jump ability, but he couldn't match her ability of flight, but he always called it levitation due to her lack of wings. She couldn't blame him for such observations; her status as a Siren put her into a in-between category on the list of monsters. Companion to Persephone, blessed and then cursed by Demeter, and left with their undying beauty and voices, along with their bird-like additions.

She had feathers on her back, but they were not large enough for flying or to be truly called wings.

"Will you get down, Mako?"

She smiled at him, slowly lowering herself down back on her feet, her feather flattening against her body, warping against her skin until they appeared as scales. She hadn't realized she landed in shallow water, but she didn't mind it. She found herself more comfortable in the water than the air.

"I'm down, I'm down, calm your fur. So why are we here again?" Mako asked, brushing off her legs as her scales flared as the moisture in the air began to disappear. Gamagoori sighed as he pointed up at the tall clocktower in the middle of the town. She

watched his ears twitch curiously, making sure no one dared venture to their spot underneath the bridge near the river's edge.

"Satsuki sent word that she needs help. Since we have the best tracking, vision, and hearing skills, she wants us on lookout. It is Halloween."

Mako groaned, kicking the puddle she stood in. "I'm tired of helping her hunt! I realize shades can't hunt silently but come on! I have to feed as well, and the river is right *here*."

Gamagoori growled under his breath, but the growl could be plainly heard. "Mako, you know why we do this. We help each other when we need to eat, especially when that time falls during this dangerous time, and Satsuki can't exactly hunt and eat without causing panic and drawing attention during Halloween with nearly every light on in the town, and every superstitious object on every corner. Even you can't much during this time because sailors know not to sail during this time of the month."

Mako sighed heavily, knowing very well that she needed to help, but she could easily be the person in the river when Satsuki lured her food. She leaned back and dove backward into the river, sighing as her scales relaxed, gills opening and chimera fins growing on her legs. She took her time rising to the surface, trying to come off as intimidating to the werewolf with her hair growing out until it appeared like inky brown tendrils and eyes going black as the starless night sky. He offered a hand to her in response, and she warily accepted it, slowly rising to sit on the water's edge and slowly retracting her hair and changing her eyes back to their bright amber brown.

"I will never understand how you can transform like this." Gamagoori murmured as he sat beside her, running a human hand over the tail fins running along her legs. She rose her legs out of the water to let him run his fingers through the sensitive tissue, making Mako blush lightly.

"Would you rather it be feathers, or fins? I can make it either or."

Gamagoori chuckled softly, his fingers moving over the scales running up her thighs. "I forgot you take from both sides of the human mythology on Sirens. I haven't seen the feathers in a while."

"I'll have to dry off. Time for a furry towel!"

Gamagoori growled, ears straightening at the idea, only making Mako laugh. He hissed as she did, the bell-like laughter hurting his sensitive hearing. She stopped her supernatural laughter and giggled into her hand, hoping that he would agree. He conceded, as she predicted. She knew he didn't like to transform against the cycle inbred into him, but he could do it with some difficulty. She only needed to dry off, and she knew all too well how comfortable and soft and fluffy his fur could be.

He relaxed with a deep breath, and let it begin. Skin rippled on his arms, ripping and tearing as fur took its place. It came in small patches, until his forearms were lined in thick medium blond hair. She ran her hands over them for a moment before crawling up into him and cuddling to his chest. He wrapped her arms around her, set his chin on top of her head, and willed his body's temperature higher to speed up the process. Mako sighed in relief as warmth enveloped her, her cheek pressed up against his chest to hear his abnormally fast beating heart.

"I can't tell if it's just you being yourself or your excited, Gamagoori. Your heart sounds like it's working overtime."

He looked down at her, seeing the scales on the edges of her face slowly disappear into her skin. "A bit of both. You know, even though I'm using my core temperature to warm you, I can still feel your icy cold skin through it."

"It comes with being what I am. My victims start to freeze at my touch before I pull them away and kill them with my bare hands, my

ugly monstrous sneer the last thing they ever see before I rip them apart, and discard the head."

Gamagoori kissed the top of her head softly. "Don't talk like that. You know that isn't true at all. You are not horrible like that, do not think for a second that you are."

Mako shivered, her legs slowly kicking out as the scales disappeared, and the soft feathers lining her legs and upper thighs came out in a delicate manner. She could feel feathers slowly pull from her skin on her arms back, the soft brown angel soft feathers swaying softly in the wind.

She felt the heat slowly dwindle from its searing temperature to a comfortable warmth. She slowly stood from his embrace and walked calmly along the river's edge, avoiding making contact with the water.

"Are you sure I'm not so... different from everyone Gamagoori? I know that it's silly and stupid for me to think like this but-"

His arms wove around her midsection, pulling her flush with his chest.

"You're the only Siren I can sense in a thousand mile radius, and you should always be proud of that. Do not worry about anything else besides that you are special and dear to everyone. Including me, especially me."

Mako chuckled and held the arms around her, her feathers flaring as her cheeks went pink. She shuffled as the temperature inside her rose, an uncommon occurrence that only he could start, it seemed.

"Thank you."

Gamagoori chuckled. "Now come on, we have a job to do, and you'll be lifting me for a bit of it."

Mako gasped, jumping out of his arms. "But you're heavy! Do you even know how much you weigh, mister? Just because I can fly-"

"Levitate."

"FLY!"

"Le-vi-tate."

"Fine, fine. Just because I can *levitate* does not mean I can carry a four hundred pound werewolf through the night up a couple hundred feet!"

Gamagoori looked offended. "I do not weigh four hundred pounds!"

Mako poked him quickly before fly up the stairs into the empty street above. "You feel like it, you big sappy puppy, now come on! I am not wasting what strength I have dragging your butt up to the clocktower."

Gamagoori raced up after her, anger molding his face into a evil look. Mako jumped into the air to avoid his fist and slowly made her way to the clocktower above him.

"Who are you calling a puppy, you pixie?!"

"Do you want Nonon on your butt on, scream on little louder, Gama" Mako taunted, flying down beside him and taking to the ground. He bumped into her lightly, sending her a little ways from him. She stumbled back next to him, and poked at his arm, the fur from earlier slowly molting away.

"You're just an annoying tease, Mankanshoku."

"But you love that I tease you and only you so intimately."

"You have me there."

# To Forget Me Not

***Personal Prompt- To forget-me-not is to smile and think of me, and all the good I gave. To forget-me-not is to see me in those you love, and remember the light which you fought to protect through the pain and suffering.***

---

His mother knew what he'd look like when he walked inside, already sitting on the floor near the couch with the first aid kit and Hi Chews at the ready. He let her strip him of his bloodied shirt and slowly wash the dried blood off his wounds, never asking questions until his cuts were either stitched up or bandaged, his bruises cared for, and his spirits were rose enough for him to talk about it. It was a similar tale as the ones before it, kids making fun of his skin color, his size, the way he spoke and held himself, his living conditions.

His mother would always listen with an open heart, not denying a single thing and accepting everything he told her. He knew that tomorrow she would call him in sick and report the abuse to the school, and make sure his bullies would pay dearly for hurting him. He liked that his mom did not take shortcuts when it came to his reassurance in making the bullies pay. Even though that fact got him beat up, he would never ask his mom to stop fighting with him.

Once pictures were taken of the wounds for evidence in the later punishments, he got to relax and eat at his snacks as his mother brought a new shirt for him, and gave him a break from his homework. He knew they would sit down together tomorrow and finish it.

His uncle came in a little later than usual, hugging his mother and coming to him to ask about the damage report. He showed every bruise, cut, and mark on him, and told him the same story. His uncle was ruthless when he had to time to listen to his stories. Him coming home meant it was one of those days. He told him to toughen up of

course, which wasn't anything new, and fight back himself, but gaining muscle and power was not something his body seemed to do well.

His uncle walked out with his mission, pictures from earlier in hand. His uncle could make anyone pee their pants if he tried, the steel master of the town with the iron eyes and steel heart. He was kind to him, although he pushed him like the father missing in his life. His mother came behind the couch and hugged him as the door closed.

"Your Uncle won't be back for a bit, he's going into town later. Do you want to help me make dinner?"

"Will there be fish tonight?"

"Sure, I'll make fish tonight. With soy, and yellow rice?"

"Don't forget the steam veggies, mommy!"

She chuckled softly, picking him up and setting him on top of the couch, picking his cheeks softly, making him laugh. Her smile went wider. HE liked her smiling.

"I wouldn't forget them. It's good to see you smile again, Ira. I missed seeing it."

He poked at the corners of his smile. He really hadn't smiled in a long time. He smiled wider. She laughed and poked at his cheeks until he was laughing with her.

"Whenever you can, Ira, smile for someone. A smile can bring anyone up from the depths of sadness. Even if they are bruised and beaten, seeing someone working to help them smile again can change a life."

"So if I smile, I help? I don't get in the way?"

"No, no. You're never in the way. If you smile, my baby, you could help them like you help me."



"And I help you make delicious food for our bellies!"

She chuckled, and helped him down, taking his hands and leading him toward their kitchen. "See, your smile is already working wonders. Just remember, a smile could shine as bright as the morning sun."

As they walked in, he stopped. Up on the counter sat a small bundle of small blue flowers. His mother took notice of his staring, and brought them down to him. He hovered a hand over them cautiously, afraid to touch what looked like glass petals.

"These are forget-me-nots," his mother explained, "They are a small blue flower. Your uncle bought some for us. Do you know what they symbolize?"

"Symbolize?"

"What they mean to us. These tiny, delicate flowers are a symbol of love, faithfulness, hope, and remembrance. Your father gave these to me when we first met."

His eyes widened in amazement. He never heard much of his father, but he already like the idea of him being kind and sweet. He carefully reached into the small bundle, and pulled two tiny flowers out. He carefully took a sniff, and smelt very little, but he could smell a soft pleasant fragrance.

"They smell nice." he murmured, "and they feel soft."

His mother chuckled. "These flowers are small, but strong. They carry deep meaning, and many people use these flowers for a symbol of love."

"I declare these my symbol for you, mommy!" he exclaimed, carefully throwing a fist with his flowers in them in the air and walking into his mother's arms.

"Because you love me, and keep me safe, and you smell nice all the time."

"Agreed. When you find these out in the world later in life, Ira, think of me and your family, think of those you cherish and love, and how they matter to you."

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"Senpai!"

He looked up to see her running toward him, bag in hand and Ryuuko trailing behind her at a leisurely pace. She looked back at Ryuuko for a moment before hauling up to him, arms outstretched for a hug. He had gotten used to them in the weeks it had begun after the war ended. He knelt and accepted the warm hug, taking in her strong scent of cooking oil and soft sweet smell of forget-me-nots.

"Good morning, Gamagoori!"

"Good morning."

She stepped back out of his arms, holding her bag in front of her. "So, you wanted to do something today?"

He nodded, and carefully moved the small bundle of flowers from behind his back. He presented them, and Mako immediately dropped her bag and took them in her arms, smelling them briefly before looking up at him in wonder.

"These are really pretty! But what are they?"

He smiled softly. "They're forget-me-nots. They don't bloom around here, so I went to my hometown to gather some."

Mako looked down at them again, one hand picking at a flower. She couldn't comprehend the trouble he went through to get so many just

for her. A smile worked its way on her face, her eyes going back and forth between him and the flowers.

"They're a symbol of love and faithfulness, of hope."

"Eh?!" She looked him directly in the eyes, bewilderment blooming across her face,

He couldn't hold back his smile. He had no fear after the mishap of his first try. He held one fist over his chest, the other touch the hands around the flowers.

"Mako, would you do me the honor of joining me on a date today?"

"EEEEH?! D-date, with m-me?!"

His smile widened, and he heard her gasp softly under her breath.  
"Absolutely."

She looked down at the flowers for a moment, then back at Ryuuko who was smiling at them. She knew of his intentions, and approved of him doing so beforehand. She gave her a quick hand signal to keep going. Mako turned back to him, and smiled wide.

"Then what are we waiting for? Let's go!"